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## **Shuster Reintroduces Landmark Bipartisan Bus and Motorcoach Safety Legislation**

*Washington, D.C.* —**Congressman Bill Shuster**, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is pleased to announce that he has reintroduced landmark bipartisan legislation to improve bus and motorcoach safety across the United States.

The centerpiece of H.R. 1135, the “Bus Uniform Standards and Enhanced Safety (BUSES) Act of 2009” is a first of its kind, comprehensive National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) study to determine what motorcoach safety requirements should be improved. This study would yield real empirical data to be used to guide motorcoach safety systems instead of relying on government mandates that are not based on science.

“The use of buses and motorcoaches remains a popular way for millions of Americans to travel every day for work and for pleasure. It is essential that the traveling public is protected with safety requirements that are based on science rather than government mandate alone,” **Shuster** said.

“I commend Congressman Shuster for his leadership on bus and motorcoach safety issues,” said **Congressman John Mica**, Ranking Republican on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “Although buses provide a safe and economical means of transportation for many, we should never settle for ‘good enough’ when it comes to safe transportation.”

“This bill emphasizes that safety must always be our top priority, but the bill also makes sure we don’t place any unnecessary burdens on operators, many of whom are small businesses running just a few vehicles,” said **Congressman John Duncan**, Ranking Republican on the Highways and Transit Subcommittee.

Congressman Shuster first introduced the bus and motorcoach safety bill in December of 2007. No action was taken on the original legislation in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, which required Shuster to reintroduce the bill this year. **Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson**, a Democrat from Texas is an original cosponsor of H.R. 1135, which underscores its bipartisan support.

“Motorcoach and charter bus transportation is very safe,” **Congresswoman Johnson** said. “However, recent fatal motorcoach accidents have shown us that additional safety measures may be warranted. I believe this legislation is an important step in the process of determining what we can do to ensure that all motorcoach and charter bus passengers are as safe as they can be.”

“The BUSES Act of 2009 is bipartisan legislation,” **Johnson** continued. “I appreciate Congressman Shuster’s long commitment to bus safety, and I look forward to working with him throughout the legislative process.”

“Ensuring the safety of passengers on the road should not be a political issue and I thank Representative Johnson for her leadership in joining me as an original cosponsor,” Shuster added. “I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make this important legislation law in the 111th Congress,” **Shuster** added.

Motorcoach and charter bus transportation remains one of the safest means of transportation available to consumers. Over the last ten years, the industry has had an average of 22.7 deaths – far below passenger cars or the airline industry. However, Congressman Shuster believes that one death is too many and applauds the industry’s efforts to make their fleets as safe as possible. These efforts must be grounded on good, sound science and not by bureaucratic mandate.

Shuster’s legislation was prompted by the late Congressman Paul Gillmor of Ohio who began drafting bus and motorcoach safety legislation. He was drawn to this issue after a bus carrying the Ohio Bluffton University baseball team was involved in an accident resulting in the deaths of 7 people. Unfortunately, Representative Gillmor passed away shortly before he was able to introduce the legislation.

**The key provisions of Shuster’s legislation include:**

- The bill stipulates that 30 months after DoT concludes a safety study of the industry;
- The Agency shall prescribe a federal standard for a motorcoach occupant protection system that accounts for frontal impact collisions, side impact collisions, rear collisions and rollovers;
- Additionally the Secretary shall provide standards for: roof strength, window glazing, ways to prevent fires on motorcoaches, and ways to improve emergency evacuation;
- The bill allows for the retrofitting of any safety provisions that are issued by NHTSA. Thus allowing the industry to adjust to the new regulations as they update their bus fleets.

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